



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR HOWARD COUNTY

For Immediate Release:

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Baltimore Man Pleads Guilty to Construction-Related Burglaries

One of four men charged in a series of burglaries at the Elkridge library while it was under construction last year has pleaded guilty to the September 15, 2017 library burglary plus the November 12, 2017 burglary at the Elkridge construction site of a shopping center. Earl Nathaniel Watkins, Jr., 28 of the 3500 block of Manchester Avenue in Baltimore, pleaded guilty to two counts of 2nd-degree burglary in Howard County Circuit Court this morning.

The Elkridge branch of the Howard County Library System, located in the 6500 block of Washington Boulevard was being renovated and expanded last year when it was hit by a series of overnight thefts of power and hand tools, along with copper wiring. Surveillance video from the construction site and scrap metal dealers led to identification of vehicles and suspects in the burglaries. Assistant State's Attorney Natasha Byus told the court that scrap dealer transaction records also led to Watkins' arrest for a burglary at shopping center under construction in the 7100 block of Troy Hill Drive, Elkridge.

Judge William V. Tucker ordered a pre-sentence investigation and set an October 4 sentencing date. Watkins remains free on bond. A 28-year-old Edgewood man, Lennard Jerrod Darby, pleaded guilty on July 2 to burglaries at the library and shopping center construction sites, and will be sentenced on October 12. Michael Gregory Cheeks, 30 of Edgewood is scheduled for trials in August for burglaries that occurred on October 8 and November 12, 2017. Tyrone Howard, 31 of Edgewood, is scheduled for trials in August and September for library burglaries that occurred on September 15 and October 8, 2017.

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